



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

## THE HEGEMONY OF RUSSIA.<sup>1</sup>

It is always instructive to recur to the impressions and forecasts of an intelligent foreign publicist who has for some time sojourned in his adopted country and employed while there every means attainable to depict its constitution and aspirations. Lapse of time, instead of diminishing, rather increases the value of such a work; for an opportunity is thus offered of testing the accuracy of this or that prediction and at the same time of tracing the organic development of the political institutions of the country described. It is barely necessary, for example, to remind a student of Germanic history of the priceless heritage bequeathed the Teutonic world by Cæsar and Tacitus, whose vivid delineations of the manners and customs of our tribal ancestors unravel much that would otherwise be unintelligible.

But why go so far away in point of time and distance for illustrations of the fact just mentioned? Have we not the immortal treatise of Tocqueville on the progress of democracy in the new world? And as long as men have faith in the virtues of self-government will they not instinctively turn over the leaves adorned with the acute observations of that brilliant young Frenchman whose name is so inseparably connected with that of our own country? Mr. Wallace set before himself quite a different task; but his graphic description of the practical operations of the most colossal autocracy of the Old World is scarcely surpassed in value and interest by Tocqueville's investigations in the more inspiring field of American institutions. The Frenchman, moreover, depicted institutions toward which all well-wishers of the human race fondly believe the institutions of every civilized people are surely drifting, whilst the Scotchman no less accurately and laboriously laid bare whatever of good and ill there may be in ancient conceptions of patriarchal government and that blind obedience on the part of the masses which

---

<sup>1</sup> Russia. By D. Mackenzie Wallace, M. A. New York: Holt & Co.

received its deathblow in America. At the same time the commanding position which Russia now occupies in the affairs of the world has naturally aroused a widespread and increasing curiosity in the people and government of the Tsar in particular, and of the great Slav race in general. Many, therefore, who are already familiar with the results of Mr. Wallace's painstaking researches—published more than a score of years ago—will in all likelihood be attracted to them with fresh interest for the purpose of obtaining some information regarding a country that must be reckoned with in the calculations of every American and European power.

Comprising one-seventh of the land surface of the globe, and covering an area of more than 8,000,000 square miles, Russia contains a population of 130,000,000. Her very magnitude, therefore, is calculated to arrest attention; for her landed area is more than double that of the United States, whilst her population equals that of the British Isles, France, and Austria-Hungary combined. Russia's geographical situation, moreover, is no less interesting than her magnitude; and a glance at the map of Europe will disclose at once several reasons why the government of the Tsar has played so important a rôle in the history of the world. Then, again, when we come to Russia we encounter racial, social, political, economic, and religious ideas so unlike those of Western Europe that we seem often to be on another planet; for it is well to bear always in mind the well-known fact that whilst France, Spain, Italy, Austria, and in a perhaps less degree England and Germany, are the heirs of the legal and administrative conceptions of the Roman Empire in the West, Russia has inherited many of the ideas and theories which in church and state radiated from Constantinople, the capital of the Eastern Empire. The Tsar of Russia—whatever may be the origin of his title—is the Emperor of the East just as the Kaiser of new Germany loves to consider himself the Emperor of the West; and thus, renewed and intensified by the manifold rivalries of modern times, the ancient dissensions of the Roman Empire have come down to us, in a measure, from a remote past, and emphasize in a rather cu-

rious manner the wonderful continuity of history. It is also a perfectly familiar fact that Russia is the home of the bulk of the Slav race, one of the last waves of Aryan migration to sweep from Asia across the continent of Europe. And while community of blood and institutions unites into something approaching a confederacy the Teutonic peoples of the north and the Latin nations of the south, the same ties draw together the Slav of Russia and his kinsmen and co-religionists of Southeastern Europe and of Northern Asia. Thus for a number of centuries—especially during the papal supremacy in political matters—Western Europe either saw or professed to see in Russia, half Asiatic and half European, a common foe against whom all should take a common stand; and this fact has exerted no slight influence on the course of European history. Russia's relations with Turkey have furthermore been a source of constant alarm and irritation whenever countries like England, for example, have been forced by popular indignation to approach the subject of the Porte's inhuman treatment of the long-persecuted Christians residing in Turkey. To Americans, on the other hand, Russia will ever appeal as our true and firm friend on more than one trying occasion when other nations across the Atlantic either gave us the cold shoulder or strove actively to increase our annoyances and dangers. Finally, Russia is to-day, by reason of her enormous resources and matchless diplomacy, the leading power of Europe, to say nothing of the rapidly increasing prominence she is acquiring throughout Northern and Central Asia. Curiously enough, too, this primacy of Russia in place of that of Great Britain, which long enjoyed the overlordship of Europe, has been achieved through the peaceful arts of statesmanship rather than those of war; but Russia's triumphs are destined to prove far more lasting and extensive than had she won her laurels on the battlefield. Her alliance with France—long feared and thwarted by Bismarck; her supremacy in China; her influence in Korea; her encroachments upon Persia; her silent marches through Afghánistán; her virtual protectorship over Turkey; her rescue of Italy from the perils encountered by that country in Africa

—in a word, Russia's augmenting influence in European and Asiatic affairs will surely make her more than ever the arbiter of international disputes, and her Tsar the king of kings. Panslavism, moreover, which has for its object the unification of the scattered members of the great Slavonic race, will unquestionably give to the influence of the Tsar a still wider sweep; and many circumstances point to the fact that Constantinople will fall into his lap whenever he deems such a step necessary and advisable.

Meantime the completion of the Caspian and Siberian railways can scarcely fail to give Russia an immense advantage in the East, the future battlefield of the world, both from a commercial and military point of view. Should the Tsar indeed transfer his seat of government from St. Petersburg to Constantinople, the gateway between Europe and Asia, he will bestride two continents and wield the power of a Cæsar in fact as well as in name. Of course no one would be hazardous enough to predict the outcome of Russia's sure and triumphant progress, but we may as well make up our minds to believe that several important events are bound to occur. In the first place Russia's steady growth cannot be checked until it has reached its normal point of development. And then, again, it seems to be very plain that Russia's influence is destined to assert itself more directly and generally on all those larger questions which are rising above the political horizon of every power of the civilized world. That the character of that influence, moreover, will in large part be determined by Russia's past, her present, and the temperament and institutions of her people, is beyond dispute. To trace the evolution of this greatest of Old World powers and to depict the ideals of its heterogeneous population, Mr. Wallace had plentiful opportunities, including a residence of almost six years in the country, from March, 1870, till December, 1875, and a close personal acquaintance with all classes of Russians. During that time he not only mastered the difficult language of the people, but also visited all parts of the empire and accumulated a large mass of material concerning the past history and the then prevailing condition of

the country. He also found time to make special investigations regarding the "Rural Commune, various systems of agriculture, the history of emancipation, the present economic condition of the peasantry, the financial system, public instruction, recent intellectual movements," and kindred topics. Questions like those just indicated naturally occur to every thoughtful mind interested in Russia, and their thorough discussion by Mr. Wallace is as valuable to-day as it was almost a quarter of a century ago; for it must be remembered that Russia is extremely conservative. Of course, however, several important historical events have occurred since the publication of this book, and these it will be well to bear in mind. First of all, the Bulgarian atrocities brought on the war with Turkey in 1877, whilst the celebrated Berlin Congress of 1878, deprived Russia of the substantial fruits of her triumph over her inveterate Mahometan foe. Then again, Alexander II., the liberator of the serfs, fell a victim to a nihilist's bomb in 1881, and his son, Alexander III., who succeeded him, passed away five years ago and was succeeded by the present Tsar, Nicholas II.

Mr. Wallace is singularly free from the prejudices of the average Englishman respecting Russia, for most English writers regard Russia as an altogether bad and unlovely country. Indeed, the pages of history scarcely record a blacker and more useless policy than that which Great Britain's jealousy of her great northern rival has made her consider it necessary to adopt, a policy which reached its lowest depths in the alliance with Turkey in order to thwart Russia's natural aspirations in Southeastern Europe. It is this fateful attitude of Great Britain that has in no small degree led to the awful butchery of Christians in various parts of Turkey, and when at last the enlightened conscience of the English people forced the government to abandon so disgraceful a position, Russia can scarcely be blamed for having distrusted such a radical change of heart. Swift and terrible has been the punishment meted out to Great Britain. The martyred Servians, Bulgarians, and Armenians have not been forgotten; for not only is the "Sick Man of

Europe" at last near death's door, but his whilom physician is quite generally discredited on the continent.

Contrary to common belief, there are many grounds for thinking that the primacy of Russia in the Areopagus of Christendom makes for peace rather than for war, and this quite apart from the present Tsar's well-known efforts to bring about a general disarmament—efforts which few thoroughly informed persons mistrust. Russia is sincerely anxious for the tranquillity of the world. This she craves in great measure for the purpose of gaining time to digest her newly acquired territory and to develop the intellectual and material welfare of her people. She also craves peace on account of higher considerations, for, strange as it may seem, there is no country more generally pervaded by religious and philanthropic ideals than Russia. Its despotic government possesses, to be sure, little that is worthy of admiration; but it often happens that whilst a particular government may be a hateful thing to us, the people living under it may possess many charming traits. So it is with Russia. Her government may be so distasteful to us that we may go the length of hoping that before very long it may peaceably give way to a more enlightened constitution. Meantime the great Russian people may be found to possess those qualities of heroism, self-sacrifice, and philanthropy that will atone for much that is otherwise unattractive. And from a political point of view we shall discover that, in spite of the despotic nature of the national government, the communal or local affairs of Russia, so far as landed interests are concerned, are administered in a spirit so democratic that its equal cannot be found elsewhere. Here and there are rifts in the ice through which we can catch glimpses of a free and mighty current toward liberty. To understand these and other elements of Russian life, however, it will be necessary to recall a few salient features connected with the history of the country.

It has been said of a Russian writer that he once described his country as "a vast building with a European front, furnished in Asiatic style, and served by Tartars disguised in

European dress." Thus are indicated the foundations of that imposing structure which overshadows not only Europe, but a large part of Asia as well; and although every one has a fair knowledge of the course of Russian history, it may be well to recall in this connection its chief landmarks, so as to bring out in strongest light its present commanding position.

To begin at the beginning, it was in the middle of the ninth century that bands of Norse adventurers, under Ruric, their half-mythical leader, settled in the vicinity of Novgorod, near the Baltic, and, having conquered the aboriginal Slav tribes, laid the foundations of Russia, a word borrowed from the name the subjugated people gave to their conquerors. But it would be an error to fancy that the invaders preserved their national characteristics; for, in point of fact, they became thoroughly slavonized in the course of a few centuries in precisely the same manner as their brethren amalgamated with the native races of France and of England. In progress of time, moreover, the northern invaders of the region now called Russia acquired supremacy over all the neighboring tribes, which in the tenth century became converted to Christianity and adopted the Greek form of worship from Constantinople. This latter fact has always made Russia a stranger to Western Europe, which in the Middle Ages was knit together by the all-prevailing influences of the Roman Catholic hierarchy. Toward the end of the twelfth century, however, the Mongols or Tartars, after having overrun the northern part of China, burst into Europe and spread consternation throughout the continent. As an outpost of civilization, Russia, of course, felt the main force of this irruption of Asiatic hordes, who, under a great leader enjoying the honorary title of Genghis Khan, conquered the country, and held it for two centuries. History tells us that during the period of Tartar supremacy the Slavonic state of Muscovy, with Moscow as its capital, gradually acquired such a preëminence among the other Slavonic principalities that flourished in what is now called Russia, that it was finally able, under Ivan the Great, to overthrow,



in 1480, the hated supremacy of the Mongol race, and to lay the foundations of the Slav empire. By humiliating Novgorod, and other independent states of the north, the hitherto sovereign principalities of the country were consolidated. No less important was Ivan's intermarriage with Sophia, the cultured and beautiful niece of the last Emperor of the East. This occurred some years after the Turks, the southern representatives of the Tartar race, had taken Constantinople, when the family of the young princess escaped to Rome, where they were protected by Pope Paul II. It was through him that the royal match was arranged, and there was something prophetic about the Metropolitan's words to Ivan: "God sends thee this illustrious spouse, a branch of the imperial tree which once overshadowed all orthodox Christianity. Happy alliance, which will make of Moscow another Constantinople, and give its grand princes all the rights of the Grecian Tsars!" Ivan thus inherited not only the Greek religion, but also the Greek ideas that had for so long a time prevailed at Constantinople. Russia is henceforth an empire, and "Holy Mother Moscow" the center of Christian influence in Eastern Europe. And just as the Italian cities threw open their gates to those learned men who fled from Ottoman persecution, so Moscow became an asylum for the same class of persons who brought with them that cultivated taste which soon manifested itself in beautiful buildings and a higher form of life everywhere.

But the Russia of which we are now speaking was no more the Russia of the present day than the American republic of 1783 is identical with our country of 1899. St. Petersburg was still to be built. As yet there was no Russia outside of Europe. Russia, indeed, barely touched the sea at any point. The stubborn Tartars were still lingering in the south, and thus cutting off Russia from the Caspian and the Euxine; hostile Swedes and Finns prevented her from reaching the Baltic, and the no less warlike Lithuanians and Poles intervened between her and Western Europe. By the end of the Middle Ages, therefore, Russia had

thrown off the yoke of her Asiatic masters, and acquired some prominence on the continent, especially after Ivan IV., in 1547, had discarded the title of prince for that of Tsar; but she was not yet in contact with European civilization, nor did she possess an outlet by sea. To her rulers, therefore, who had any pride of race or place, two lines of development were plainly discernible—one lay to the east, the other toward the west. Fortunately for Russia, the tasks that were a prerequisite to a realization of her dreams found their appropriate performers; and, although we may justly condemn many of the schemes resorted to by successive rulers in the accomplishment of their work, we must judge both actors and events by the standards of the sixteenth century rather than by those of the nineteenth. Hence when we encounter men like that Ivan the Terrible, who wrote his name in blood, we should remember the words of a historian of Russia, that “the century was that of Henry VIII. in England, of Ferdinand and the Inquisition in Spain, of Catherine de’ Medici and the great massacres in France. The influence of the Tartar slavery was seen in the severity of the new laws. For a debt a man could be tied up and beaten three hours a day; if, after a month, no one was moved to pay his debts for him, he was sold as a slave. Thieves and murderers were hanged, beheaded, broken on the wheel, drowned under the ice, or whipped with sinews which were made to ‘give a sore lash and bite into the flesh.’ Sorcerers were roasted alive in cages, traitors were tortured by iron hooks which tore their sides into ten thousand pieces; false coiners had to swallow molten lead!” But, in spite of such inhuman atrocity, Ivan the Terrible did much to widen the interests of Russia. It was mainly through his influence, for example, that Kazan in the northeast and Astrakhan in the southeast were wrested from the Tartars. Russia thus acquired control of the Volga, one of the principal natural waterways of the country, which brought her dominions fairly to the Caspian. The mention of this Ivan’s name also brings up the very important acquisition and colonization of Siberia, which was begun in 1581, under the

direction of Gregory Strogónof and a numerous band of Cos-sack and other adventurers. Thus while the Spaniards, the English, and the French were partitioning America among themselves, Russian exploring parties were carrying the imperial eagles into Asia, and sailing down the Amoor River on their way to the Pacific. Meantime the line of Ruric the Conqueror becomes extinct, and election brings to the throne in 1613 Michael Romanoff, a branch of whose family still rules Russia. Among the many able rulers of this line there is one who soars so high above all the others that one instinctively recalls his name whenever one has anything at all to say of Russia. For what Washington is to the United States that Peter the Great is to his country. And yet it would be extremely difficult to find two characters so entirely unlike each other as the "Father" of our country and the man on whom Russians confer the same title. But each had a special mission to fulfill, and each was the creature of his time. Contrast, for example, Russia as Peter found it with Russia as he left it when his stormy career of thirty-six years as emperor ended in 1725. When Peter began his long reign Russia could boast of but one seaport, and that was on the White Sea. It is said, indeed, that at that time there was no such word as "fleet" in the Russian vocabulary. Manufacturing and agricultural interests were correspondingly defective. But by a series of extraordinary triumphs, Azof, the key to the Black Sea, was soon in his grasp, and shortly afterwards Peter acquired virtual control over the Baltic through the foolish campaign of the eccentric Charles XII. of Sweden. It was then that Peter went to work in his usually vigorous manner to found, in 1703, on the banks of the Neva the city that was to bear his name, and to become the new capital of the Russian Empire. As a result of these and other improvements, Peter the Great introduced Western civilization into Russia, and converted his subjects from Asiatics into Europeans. Never disdaining work of any kind himself, he rudely shocked the pride of his boyars and startled all classes by the active means he employed to rid them of their ancient conceptions

of fashion and religion, and although he did much to elevate the crown above every other element of national life, a strong hand was then necessary.

Of the successors of Peter the Great the space at our command will not permit us to speak at any great length. Soon after his death the council elevated Catherine, his widow, to the imperial throne; and she busied herself for two years in furthering Peter's magnificent schemes. Under her son, Peter II., the reactionaries got the upper hand; but his premature death resulted in the accession of the cruel Anna, who, with her favorite Biron, plagued the country for several years and unsuccessfully attempted to germanize it. Finally there came to the throne, toward the end of the last century, that extraordinary woman whom many regard as the greatest female sovereign that ever held the scepter of royalty. Of the many elements of strength and weakness in the character of Catherine II., this is not the place to speak. Suffice it to say that the conquest of Crimea in the South—afterwards to become the seat of a great and useless war—and of Poland in the West, gave to Russia many important advantages; and when her reign came to an end, shortly after the expiration of President Washington's second administration, Russia was stronger and more enlightened than ever before; for Catherine had bravely carried out the policy of Peter the Great, not only by widening her dominion, but also by opening wide its doors for the reception of Western ideas. With her possessions on the Baltic and the Black Sea, Russia was now in a position to become a naval power, while the conquest of Poland brought her face to face with the rest of Europe. Thenceforth Russia had to be a world power.

The Russians naturally regard Peter the Great with the reverence with which all right-minded Americans regard Washington. His resolute courage; his tireless industry, that sent him to Holland to work as a carpenter in order to learn the art of shipbuilding; his introduction into Russia of the trades of Western Europe; his military genius; his political and social reforms; his construction in the marshes of the Neva of a great capital, which was to be the window through which light from

abroad was to illuminate his people; his conquests; and finally, his abiding faith in the genius and capacity of the Slav race—all these things, in spite of temporary loss of popularity, and active opposition at the time, tend to make of him the hero of Russia. And scarcely inferior to him in many respects was the illustrious Catherine, one of several remarkable women who in a land where women are still denied many primary rights in church and state, wielded an influence of transcendent importance. Subsequent years witnessed the reactionary policy of Paul; the vagaries of Alexander I., under whom occurred the disasters to Napoleon in and around Moscow; and the Russo-Turkish war of 1828-29, largely caused by Russian sympathies with the struggling Greeks, who owe much of their freedom to Nicholas I. The barbarities of the Turks had aroused the indignation of the whole civilized world, and although it is true that the English and the French fleets combined with that of Russia in the naval engagement of Navarino, the brunt of the war fell upon the great northern champion of the oppressed Christians. Gen. Diebitsch, the Russian commander, had already crossed the Balkans, and seized Adrianople; and in Asia Kars and Erzerum had fallen into the hands of the brave Paskevitch. The triumphant regiments of the Tsar were already marching upon Constantinople, determined to end, once for all, the Mahometan anachronism and its lustful and cruel despotism. Suddenly a halt was called by Austria and England, who were jealous of Russia's glory. So the Peace of Adrianople, which ended this war, gave to Greece her independence, to be sure, but it also bolstered up the Ottoman Empire and has ever since enabled the Sultan to keep alive the Eastern question by playing off one European power against the others. In spite of these facts, however, Russia made enormous gains; for the boundaries in the east were so drawn that a part of Turkish Armenia, with the city of Akhalzikh, passed under Russian sovereignty. Turkey also conceded that the sovereignty of Russia extended over Georgia, Imeritia, Mingrelia, Gouriel, and other Cau-

casian countries. No less significant was the fact that passage was allowed through the Dardanelles and Bosphorus to Russian merchant ships, or, in other words, the Black Sea was opened to vessels at peace with Turkey, whilst Russia was given the right of navigating the Danube. Russia had now acquired a more complete right than ever before to interfere in the affairs of those Christian Slav principalities in Southeastern Europe that were still under the sovereignty of Turkey. All this naturally enhanced the prestige of the Tsar throughout that part of the continent, and the crescent began to exhibit unmistakable evidences of a decline. And it was these circumstances that paved the way for the well-known events of 1853-56, including the Crimean war. Their narration is scarcely necessary. It may be desirable, however, to outline them in a few words.

The affairs of the Levant had long been engrossing the public attention of the civilized world, and the problem of getting rid of "the unspeakable Turk" without destroying the balance of power was a thorn in the side of Europe. It was at this time that the Tsar Nicholas gave to Turkey the name of "Sick Man of Europe," which it has ever since borne in diplomatic circles. It happened in this wise. Talking one day with Sir George Seymour, the British Ambassador to St. Petersburg, the Emperor in an outburst of confidence declared: "We have on our hands a sick man—a very sick man; I tell you frankly it would be a great misfortune if he should give us the slip some of these days, especially if it happened before all the necessary arrangements were made." The Tsar's plans embraced the independence of Servia, Bosnia, Bulgaria, and the principalities of the Danube under Russia's protection. Constantinople was to be "occupied provisionally by Russian troops;" and Crete and Egypt—both under Turkish rule—were held out as baits to Great Britain. Notwithstanding England's opposition, the Tsar pursued his schemes. Meantime, the occasion of the war was furnished by the familiar quarrel between the Greek and Latin monks at Jerusalem over the keys to the Holy Places.

The Tsar naturally espoused the cause of the former, and

went so far as to declare that Russia should be given a protectorate over all members of the Greek Church in the Turkish empire. Prince Menschikoff urged these demands in so overbearing a manner that it is highly probable that he counted on their rejection. Be that as it may, the Porte declined to listen to him, and the Russian ambassador quitted Constantinople, uttering threats. In the war that ensued—usually styled the Crimean war—the Western powers, notably Great Britain and France, once more held up the hands of Turkey. The battle of the Alma, the siege of Sebastopol, including Balaklava and the charge of the immortal Light Brigade; the storming of the Malakoff, and the final defeat of Russia are facts too sufficiently well known to demand more than the barest mention. But the Peace of Paris, which brought hostilities to a close in 1856, is a landmark, not only in the history of Russia, but also in that of the world. By the terms of this celebrated convention Russia lost much of what she had previously acquired, whilst at the same time the Christian states of enlightened Western Europe tightened the Sultan's grip upon the throats of his Christian subjects. The parties to this treaty were Austria, France, Great Britain, Russia, Sardinia, and the Ottoman Porte. Prussia was also asked to take part. The following articles were agreed upon:

I. The Black Sea was made neutral and opened to the commerce of the world, and no war ships were to be allowed to enter the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus.

II. The Danube was opened to commerce.

III. Russia ceded the mouths of the Danube, which were given to Moldavia.

IV. Russia renounced the one-sided protectorate over the Christians of Turkey as well as that claimed over the principalities of the Danube.

V. Russia not only restored Kars, but also promised to establish no arsenals on the Black Sea, nor to maintain there a fleet greater than that of the Sublime Porte.

VI. In return for these concessions on the part of Russia, the Western Powers gave her back Sebastopol, after

having first destroyed the docks, the constructions in the harbor, and the fortifications! And, as if not sufficiently well satisfied with this resuscitation of the "Sick Man," Dr. John Bull and his consulting physicians went so far as to get Turkey admitted into the pale of international law as a civilized state! In other words, the power that at that time unhappily dominated European affairs lent the whole weight of its enormous influence to the meanest and cruelest government that ever rose above the surface of European politics, or, indeed, above the surface of the earth, and, rather than let Russia carry out her natural policy, jealously and wickedly handed back to Turkey the long-oppressed subjects who were so near their freedom. Henceforth fear of Russia is more than ever the key to England's foreign policy, and anything to crush Russia the maxim of her diplomatists. To carry out these fatuous ideas, therefore, England deliberately committed herself to the task of preserving the integrity of the Ottoman Empire. What if thousands of persecuted Christians were butchered with startling frequency and under the most horrible circumstances imaginable? Was not Russia being kept out of Constantinople? Were not British trading vessels protected on their way to India? And, after all, were not the Armenians a pretty low sort of folk, and the Sultan an accomplished gentleman? The inevitable result of this purblind and unwarranted policy was to unite the Christians of the Balkans, and forward the Panslavonic movement to such an extent that Russian influence rapidly acquired supremacy throughout Southeastern Europe. Indeed, had England purposely adopted a plan of building up the supremacy of Russia, she could not have selected a better course. For the spirit of nationality was quickly aroused, and the Russian's heart beat as it had not done since the devastations of the earlier Tartar hordes had called him to the aid of his southern kinsmen.

But, while these exciting affairs abroad were disturbing the quiet of Russia, grave difficulties at home were claiming the attention of her rulers. "About the year 1840," says Mr. Wallace, "began to appear what may be called 'the



men with aspirations,' a little band of generous enthusiasts, strongly resembling the youth in Longfellow's poem who carries a banner with the device 'Excelsior,' and strives ever to climb higher, without having any clear notion of where he is going to, or what he is to do when he reaches the summit. At first they had little more than a sentimental enthusiasm for the true, the beautiful, and the good, and a certain Platonic love of free institutions, liberty, enlightenment, progress, and everything that was generally comprehended at that period under the term 'liberal.' Gradually, under the influence of current French literature, their ideas became a little clearer, and they began to look on reality around them with a critical eye." The prospect, however, was not encouraging. For to the wild tyranny of the central government were added corruption on the part of public officials, venality in courts of justice, apathetic indifference among the nobles, and a system of serfage which was a disgrace to civilization. This unrest was further intensified by the rigorously repressive system of Nicholas, whose failure in the Crimean war fanned the smoldering embers of popular indignation into a blaze. With the advent of the humane Alexander II. a new era was ushered in, especially after the emancipation of the serfs and the establishment of the communal system of land tenure. All Russia was at this time throbbing with the pulsations of a new and joyous life. It seems, indeed, as though the renaissance spirit which had reclaimed Western Europe was about to elevate the Russian people by arousing them from their eternal lethargy. Alexander felt the impulse of the day. Foreign ships were again allowed to enter Russian ports; and various repressive measures, including the law limiting the number of university students to three hundred, adopted because of the ill-starred liberal movement of 1825, were abolished. "It was altogether a joyful time," a Russian writer is quoted as singing, "as when after a long winter the genial breath of spring floats over the cold, stony earth, and nature awakes from her deathlike sleep, speech, long held

down by the laws of police and censors, now began to flow like a mighty river that has just been freed from ice."

Already, however, "the struggle between the Classical and the Romantic school, between the adherents of traditional æsthetic principles and the partisans of untrammelled poetic inspiration, which was being carried on in Western Europe, was reflected in Russia. . . . Romantic poetry acquired the protection of the government and the patronage of the court, and the names of Zhukófski, Púshkin, and Lermontoff—the chief representatives of the Russian Romantic school—became household words in all ranks of the educated classes." Public affairs were ignored, and "such events as the French Revolution of 1830 paled before the publication of a new poem by Púshkin." The transcendental philosophy, which in Germany, as Mr. Wallace assures us, went hand in hand with the Romantic literature, found a faint reflection in Russia, especially among a small group of young professors and students in Moscow, who passed from Schiller and Goethe to Schelling and Hegel. To these Hegel was as a man inspired; and with all the ardor of neophytes they viewed even the commonest incidents of everyday life through the medium of philosophy. Ordinarily men of quiet, grave, contemplative demeanor, "their faces could flush and their blood boil when they discussed the all-important question whether it is possible to pass logically from Pure Being through Nonentity to the conception of development and definite existence!" Of course a healthier reaction took place in Russia, as elsewhere, especially after the broad humor of Gogol, the "Russian Dickens," had hit off to the life the moonshine and heart gushings which had so long made a caricature of literature. But this necessarily brief reference to Russian writers will prepare us to understand the influence of Hegel on the national aspirations of the people, and the impulse given by that philosopher to the ambitions of the Slavophiles. According to Hegel's well-known theory of universal history, in each period of the world's career: "Some one nation or race had been intrusted with the high mission of ennobling the Absolute

Reason or Weltgeist to express itself in objective existence. . . . The incarnation had taken place first in the Eastern monarchies, then in Greece, next in Rome, and lastly in the Germanic race; and it was generally assumed, if not openly asserted, that this mystical metempsychosis of the Absolute was now at an end." But the patriotic group of Moscow enthusiasts were not prepared to admit that the circle of existence was complete, and that in the Teutonic race the Weltgeist had found its highest and final expression. Such an idea was flatly contradicted by the entire history of Russia, to say nothing of the unmistakable symptoms of decay everywhere, in their opinion, visible in the West, where "opinion struggles against opinion, power against power, throne against throne;" and where, sadder still, "science, art, and religion, the three chief motors of social life, have lost their force."

This brings us finally to the Slavonic ideal. It is nothing more or less than the virtual ascendancy of the race, as interpreted by the Moscow worshipers at the shrine of Hegel. To the races of Western Europe the Slav confidently declares: "Your work is well-nigh done. It is true that you have accomplished much for mankind, and secured for the individual certain rights of which you never fail to boast. You have also taught the world how to simplify production, guide industrial development, build huge cities, and to increase the comforts of life; and it must be granted that you have even made some contributions to things spiritual. But you have made a god of money, and the thin shell that stands between you and your inevitable doom is soon to be crushed by the irresistible forces already fermenting beneath it. And when the end does come, the young, lusty Slav race—that knows nothing of social classes, money getting, political rivalries, or the fiction of parliamentary government—will take up the work anew and reconstruct the society of the world on the principles of equality and brotherhood, and the personal rule of a wise and benevolent autocrat."

The extent to which these dreams of the Slavophiles will be realized cannot, of course, be foretold. There are, more-

over, a sufficient number of optimists still left in the Western world, and endowed with enough common sense to believe that, whatever evils may exist in society, they are by no means incurable so long as men are at liberty to publish them. A far greater cause for despair would be the thought that a people of such vitality and intelligence as the Russians—especially the educated section of the population—will always be content with a system of national administration that belongs to the age of barbarism. And while it is perfectly true that Russia may have postponed social convulsions by conveying to the emancipated serfs large areas of communal lands, it is not yet certain that she has solved the agrarian problem. Even granting that she has, however, the present rapid development of industrial life will surely bring with it that proletariat, which has for so many years been the bugbear of her rulers. With Western problems, therefore, Russia is pretty apt to become more occidental in habits of thought and action. At the same time it would be unwise to close one's eyes to the fact that not a single European power can now make a move without first finding out its probable influence on Russia. And in this keen rivalry of modern times Russia has many advantages; for, in addition to an enormous amount of territory—so flat that the population naturally flows southward and eastward—her possessions are capable of feeding a countless multitude, and are very hard to attack. Russia, moreover, has no political parties to find fault with those in power; no free pen that can point out corruption and inefficiency in high places; no angry constituency eager to display their opposition at the ballot box. The word of one man is law; and his heterogeneous millions—now being rapidly assimilated in race and religion—know no other rule of civil conduct than blind obedience to their omnipotent lord. No less majestic are Russia's strides in the field of international politics. To find new markets for dry goods and hardware is not the motive power of her march across Asia; for she is treading a far more glorious path—a path older than that made by any modern industrial contrivance. What Russia seeks is

dominion for the sake of dominion—the imperialism that has lured many a power to its destruction; and although she may for a time be the arbiter of international disputes, to conclude that she will eventually acquire universal dominion would be tantamount to saying that human progress is impossible and liberty an idle dream.

B. J. RAMAGE.